

TWO CONCEPTS FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE LEBANON CRISIS OVER THE NEXT
FEW WEEKS

I. CONCEPT A. [where we can easily be]:

A measured response to the current crisis, this option buys time for a sober review of US interests in the maelstrom of Lebanese politics and in the Middle East. Help GOL/LAF control Beirut, hasten Lebanese Reconciliation Process, and send forceful signal to Syria, Saudi Arabia, Soviets, etc, through increased MNF aggressive self-defense and deterrence, with LAF taking lead role in pushing out from Beirut and expanding GOL controlled perimeter.

A. Immediate Objectives

1. Buttress LAF to carry out its duties
2. Deter Syria and Lebanese factions from firing at MNF
3. Enhance McFarlane mission leverage on Damascus.

B. Basic Concept

1. Obtain greater international support through increased participation and commitment by other MNF contributors.
2. Lebanese Government legitimacy reinforced
3. US role continues to be supportive although more assertive.

C. Illustrative Measures

1. LAF training and supply is tailored towards aggressively pushing out from Beirut perimeter.
2. All MNF countries [France, UK, Italy, US] loosely coordinate response to hostile fire with immediate, violent, but prudent and proportional response. Share intelligence and maximize impact.
3. All MNF forces mutually support each others' areas of responsibility, e.g. EISENHOWER responds to shelling of UK positions in West Beirut.
4. More aggressive measures to defeat artillery including, as appropriate, naval bombardment, counter-battery fire, and air strikes.
5. US/French carriers on scene [EISENHOWER, FOCH, IWO JIMA and TARAWA] and British land-based aircraft provide immediate support. UK Harrier carrier INVINCIBLE arrives in area. Italian cruiser on way.
6. Second USN attack carrier and New Jersey prepare to sail.

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D. Area of Operations

1. National MNF forces stay in present areas but cooperate and reach out together to sting those who dare hit MNF.
2. LAF, with its rear better covered by more powerful MNF defense expands GOL controlled perimeters, aggressively seeking out by most effective means and silencing artillery positions threatening Beirut. [Para-military raids, for example, could be most effective.]

E. Implications

1. New situation leads to more explicit expression of war powers, opening way for sharing intelligence, hostile fire pay, and essential training of LAF.
2. Low risk of direct confrontation with Syria but will get their attention.
3. Opportunity for GOL to continue its consultations building Lebanese consensus and for Bud to work solution.

F. Rationale: to gain time and send a strong signal

1. Time is needed for US policy makers to make considered decision on importance of Lebanon to US policy in the region and critical consequences of potential next steps.
2. Gemayel needs time, and a substantially strengthened hand, if he is to pursue a policy of national reconciliation and consolidate.
3. Mandate for MNF in 1982 stretches like rubber band but does not break. With this concept we can generate Congressional and public support.

II. CONCEPT B. [much more significant step]

US now assumes responsibility for defense of City of Beirut if it becomes obvious LAF unable to defend itself. US now willing, as bottom line, to ensure survival of GOL and city [State] of Beirut. A watershed option to be taken only as a consequence of review of global requirements at the highest level.

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A. Immediate Objectives

1. Prevent final collapse of GOL and destabilizing effect that would have on region and future peace prospects
2. Maintain minimum semblance of order in Lebanon.
3. Deter Syrian advance to occupy all of Lebanon.

B. Basic Concept

1. Maximum effort to sustain international support through MNF partners. We sink or swim together.
2. Active US and European military action to deter or defeat attempt to overrun Beirut or repress internal uprising and establish Lebanese Government hostile to western interests.
3. Accept that preservation of Beirut city is imperative US national interest if GOL is legitimate by our definition. We would do the job alone [ie - without MNF] if necessary.

C. Illustrative Measures

1. Keep LAF out front [and controlling internal Beirut factions] but resume MNF patrols in the city of Beirut
2. Expand USMC contingent and widen USMC perimeter around city and airport. French, Italians and UK take similar steps.
3. Increased defensive artillery, naval and air support as required. MNF "reaches out to sting well beyond city limits".
4. Massive international buildup offshore; second carrier and NEW JERSEY speed to Lebanon.

D. Area of Operations

1. MNF would assume active defense of city extending area to cover approaches to Beirut.
2. Air and Naval activity extended to any area of Lebanon where necessary to silence hostile fire. Commando raids could be expected.
3. Possible Strikes against Syrian artillery positions inside sovereign Syrian territory could not be excluded. [Soviet SA-5's].

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E. Implications

1. Imperative requirement is strong bipartisan congressional support as well as backing from our MNF partners.
2. Rubber band mandate of original purpose stretches immediately beyond breaking point.
3. Premature unless LAF collapses and even then still imprudent without intense scrutiny.
4. Potential for disruption of Middle East peace efforts. Polarization of friends and radicals.
5. Possible alienation of moderate Arab governments but might unite key friends.
6. Preservation of symbol of Lebanese independence.
7. Big spin-offs for Bud.

F. Rationale

1. Even with collapse of GOL, Middle East interests of the US would continue. Preservation of US presence in Lebanon may prove to be overriding consideration.
2. Independence of Lebanon has been pledged by succeeding American administrations since Eisenhower.
3. Israelis are still dominant local force.
4. Can an unpredictable situation lead to instant and lasting success?

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